



High Weald Hero Activity Card

Leaf Sizes



Equipment: Squared paper (1 sheet per child), pencils, leaf identification sheet (e.g. www.naturedetectives.org.uk/download/id_leaves).

Location: Woodland would be best but leaves can be collected from various outdoor locations.

Audience: KS 1 & 2

Time: 45 minutes

An activity that combines numeracy skills with leaf identification

Activity Description: Take the children for a walk, asking them to collect a selection of leaves each. Tell them to find leaves that really interest them and are of different sizes. Explain that leaves should be ones that have already fallen to the ground, rather than pluck still-growing ones. Once the leaves are collected, spend time identifying them and see which is the most common leaf or if anyone has found something unusual. Children then place each leaf onto the squared paper and draw round it. They can then measure the area of the leaf by counting the number of squares inside the outline. Part squares should be counted as half, or as nothing if they are very small (a good opportunity for discussing rounding?). *For KS1 children it may be more suitable for them to just collect the leaves and have fun printing with them or drawing their own versions, rather than trying to draw around and calculate the area!*

Extension: You may wish to extend this task to include work on averages. For example, if children have collected 3 leaves each, they could add up their respective areas and divide the total by 3, to find the mean. Alternatively, this could be done by species type, e.g. calculating the average size of all oak leaves found.

As part of this activity, you are likely to find leaves from common trees in Britain such as oak, ash, hawthorn and birch. However, if you are completing this task in ancient woodland look out for hornbeam, hazel and sweet chestnut leaves too.



High Weald Teaching Point: If you are in the woods, see if there are any signs of 'coppicing' - a traditional woodland management technique. Coppicing is when trees are cut periodically to ground level and are left to regrow from the cut stumps, known as stools, often producing multiple stems. The word coppice is derived from the French 'couper', meaning to cut. Coppicing trees allows more light to the woodland floor, as the trees are smaller or have been taken away. Increased light is very beneficial for plants. So cleverly, ground flora in ancient coppiced woodland, e.g. bluebells, flower before the leaves on the trees emerge in spring. In addition, seeds which have lain dormant - sometimes for many years - germinate in response to this additional light.

Activity adapted from The Outdoor Classroom, Scholastic



Check out the Learning Zone at www.highweald.org